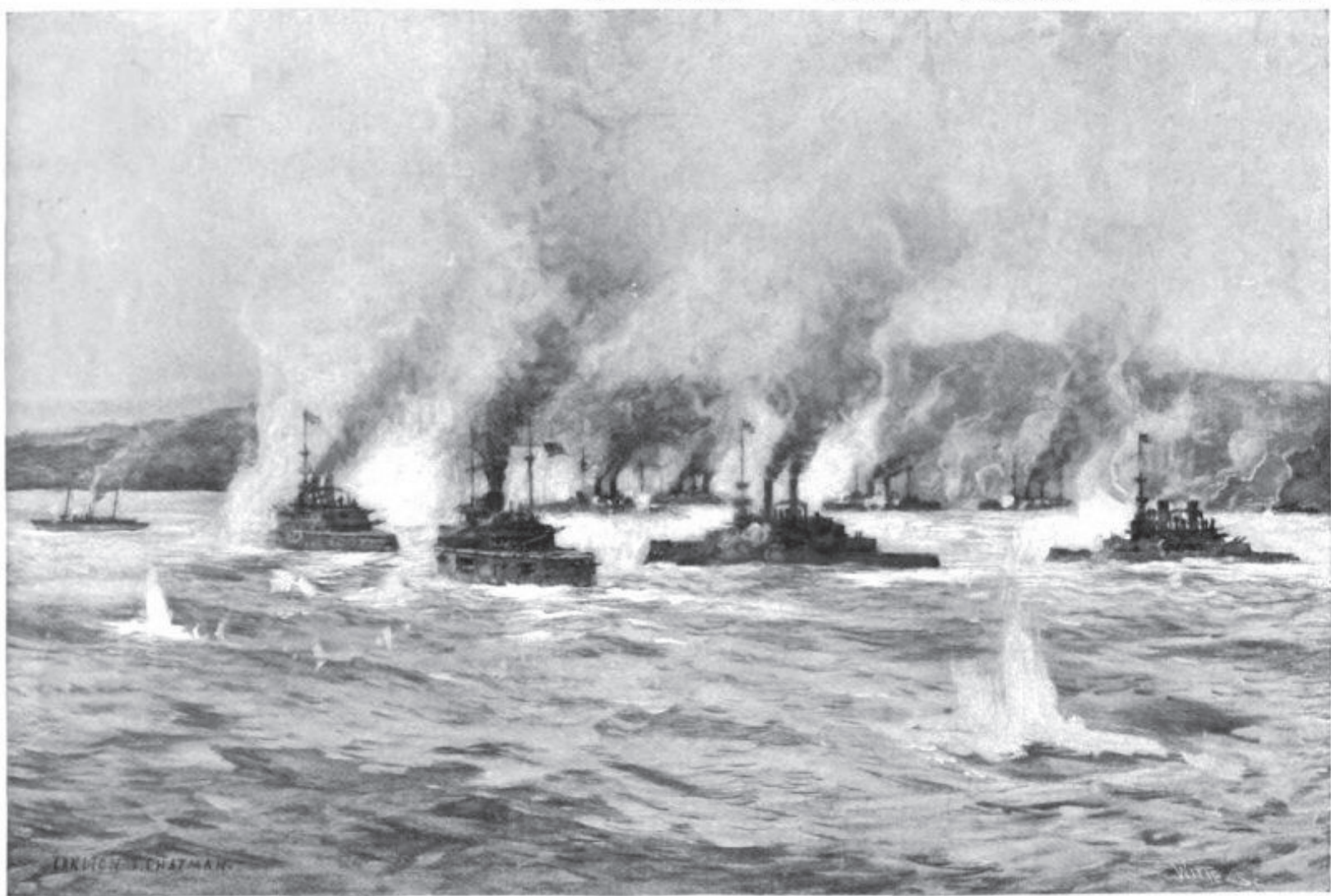


Virago, Cristóbal Colón.

Maria Teresa,

Almirante Oquendo.

Fuero and Pluton.



Vices, turning out.

Oregon.

Texas.

Iowa.

Indiana.

THE BATTLE OF SANTIAGO, JULY 3.

THE NAVAL CAMPAIGN OF 1898 IN THE WEST INDIES.

BY S. A. STAUNTON, LIEUTENANT UNITED STATES NAVY.*

FROM the time of the destruction of the *Maine*, in the harbor of Havana, on February 15, our naval force in Southern waters had been placed partially upon a war footing. It was not by any means that war was considered inevitable. On the contrary, it was thought that even should the Court of Inquiry decide that the *Maine* had been treacherously destroyed, Spain would meet all reasonable demands; but the state of preparation was a state of security demanded by military prudence, and also was valuable to men and officers as a discipline and exercise. The men had already been well trained at the guns—well instructed in their mechanism and manuals—the principal business of the cruising man-of-war in time of peace; but to this training was added constant daily target practice with sub-calibre fire—a form of exercise which is much approved, and for which all batteries are now fitted. It consists in firing a small projectile from a large gun, employing the pointing and aiming mechanism of the latter. To effect this the small gun is placed inside the breech of the large gun, and precisely in its centre, and is held there by a special fitting. So adjusted, its axis coincides with that of the larger piece, and, except for the shock and recoil, the normal firing conditions with full charge are imitated. One-pounders are ordinarily employed for the sub-calibre of the heavy turret-guns, and musket barrels for those of the secondary batteries. During those waiting days at Tortugas and Key West, fluttering flags a few hundred yards from each ship showed the targets, and for hours each day the splash of bullets followed the rifle reports with monotonous regularity.

After each shot, the gun was swung off the target, brought back, and aimed anew for the next, thus making it an independent exercise. It was not inspiring or dramatic, this steady burning of powder in small quantities during the sultry afternoons, but it was the sort of work which makes war deadly, and it bore its fruit in the swift and terrible destruction of Cervera's fleet.

The Navy Department had directed that all vessels should be painted a uniform gray, the "war-color," to diminish as much as possible their visibility under the varying conditions of the atmosphere. The complements of the vessels—i. e., the number of men assigned to them—were increased to a war footing, and with every preparation made to render his vessels efficient fighting-machines, the commander-in-chief awaited his instructions. A number of additions to the squadron had arrived, the government having already begun the purchase and equipment of auxiliaries.

In addition to the force under Rear-Admiral Sampson's command, known as the "North Atlantic Squadron," a second squadron, called the "Flying Squadron," intended as a compact force for expeditionary work, had been organized at Hampton Roads, and placed under the command of Commodore Schley. The *Brooklyn* was the flag-ship of this squadron, and the battle-ships *Massachusetts* and *Texas* were assigned to it; also the fast cruisers *Columbia* and *Minneapolis*. Later a third squadron, known as the "Northern Patrol Squadron," was formed under the command of Commodore Howell, who had been recalled from the Mediterranean Station. The flag-ship *San Francisco*, the ram *Katahdin*, and the armed auxiliaries converted from the purchased steamships of the Morgan Line

* Lieutenant Staunton served throughout the war in the flag-ship *New York* as Assistant Chief of Staff to Admiral Sampson.

were the principal vessels of this command, whose special function was to protect the Northern Atlantic coast from Spanish raids. Neither of these squadrons saw service until they were sent to Cuban waters after the appearance of Cervera in the West Indies, when they ceased to exist as independent commands and were placed under the orders of Admiral Sampson. The double-turreted monitors were fitted out as speedily as possible and sent to Key West; and the old single-turreted monitors, which had long been lying in the back channel at League Island, and were useless except as floating batteries, were placed in the Northern ports, where, manned by Naval Militia, and aided by armed tugs and other improvised auxiliaries, they formed an inner line of naval defence.

When the arrival of Cervera in the West Indies defined the direction and purpose of his campaign, the Flying Squadron was ordered at once to Cuban waters; and after the Spanish fleet was blockaded at Santiago de Cuba, and a large part of our naval force had, in consequence of the blockade, and of the necessities of convoy duty attendant upon the army expedition, been assembled on the southern side of the island, Commodore Howell was ordered South to re-enforce the blockade of Havana and other ports on the northern side.

War began on April 21, and early on the morning of April 22 eleven vessels and four torpedo-boats moved towards Havana.

The formation was one intended to guard against surprise, and to be ready for fighting. In one column, led by the flag-ship *New York*, were placed the heavy-armored vessels—the fighting-line. In a parallel column, led by the *Cincinnati*, were the lighter cruisers. The *Mayflower*, *Wilmington*, and the torpedo-boats were placed in advance and on the flanks as scouts. There was no pageantry nor pomp, no fluttering of pennons nor playing of bands, no cheering, no bystanders. The sun rose upon fifteen gray masses, large and small, steadily moving south, the smoke pouring in black clouds from their funnels. War is a serious business, and in that moment of its commencement every one felt it to be so.

There was a lack of definite information as to the Spanish naval forces in Cuban ports. It was known that they con-

tained a number of small cruisers and gunboats and some torpedo vessels; but the condition and speed of the last—the only vessels likely to cause annoyance—were not known. The *Vizcaya* and *Oquendo*, lately at Havana, had gone to the eastward two weeks before, but it was among the possibilities that they might still be in West Indian, even in Cuban, waters. As a matter of fact, they were at that moment at the Cape de Verde Islands, having joined Admiral Cervera on the 19th.

The fleet approached Havana late in the afternoon. Some delay was occasioned by the chase and capture of a Spanish steamer, and it was not until the next morning that the vessels were distributed to their blockading stations. We learned later that something like a panic had been created in Havana by the appearance of the fleet and the expectation of an immediate bombardment.

The novelty of a blockade soon wears off. It is the most monotonous and fatiguing and the least satisfactory of all the operations of naval warfare—a period of waiting and watchfulness, of constant attention to the positions of the vessels, of unremitting lookout night and day, of infinite observance of all the precautions of war. The dullness is varied by an occasional chase; but these, being all of about the same character, soon 'cease to excite more than a passing interest. The smoke of a steamer is seen on the horizon, and a blockader dashes off to investigate. The steamer holds her course, and if that draws away from the pursuing vessel, the incident develops into a stern-chase, lasting sometimes several hours. An enemy of course does her best to escape; and a neutral is wholly within her right in ignoring the presence and movements of a cruiser until a gun commands her to heave to; and as the belligerent right of search is an annoyance and vexation to neutrals, they do not, as a rule, hesitate to stretch their privileges to the farthest point consistent with safety. As the cruiser, working her engines at top speed, draws within gunshot of the flying merchantman, which with modern guns is from three to five miles, she fires a blank charge. If this does not appear to be seen or heard, she fires a shell, directing it wide of the mark, and the most obstinate skipper seldom risks the chances of the third shot. A chase at night is more

Plans of battle, suited to finding Cervera's fleet in the harbor of San Juan or to meeting it at sea, had been arranged, and communicated to all the vessels.

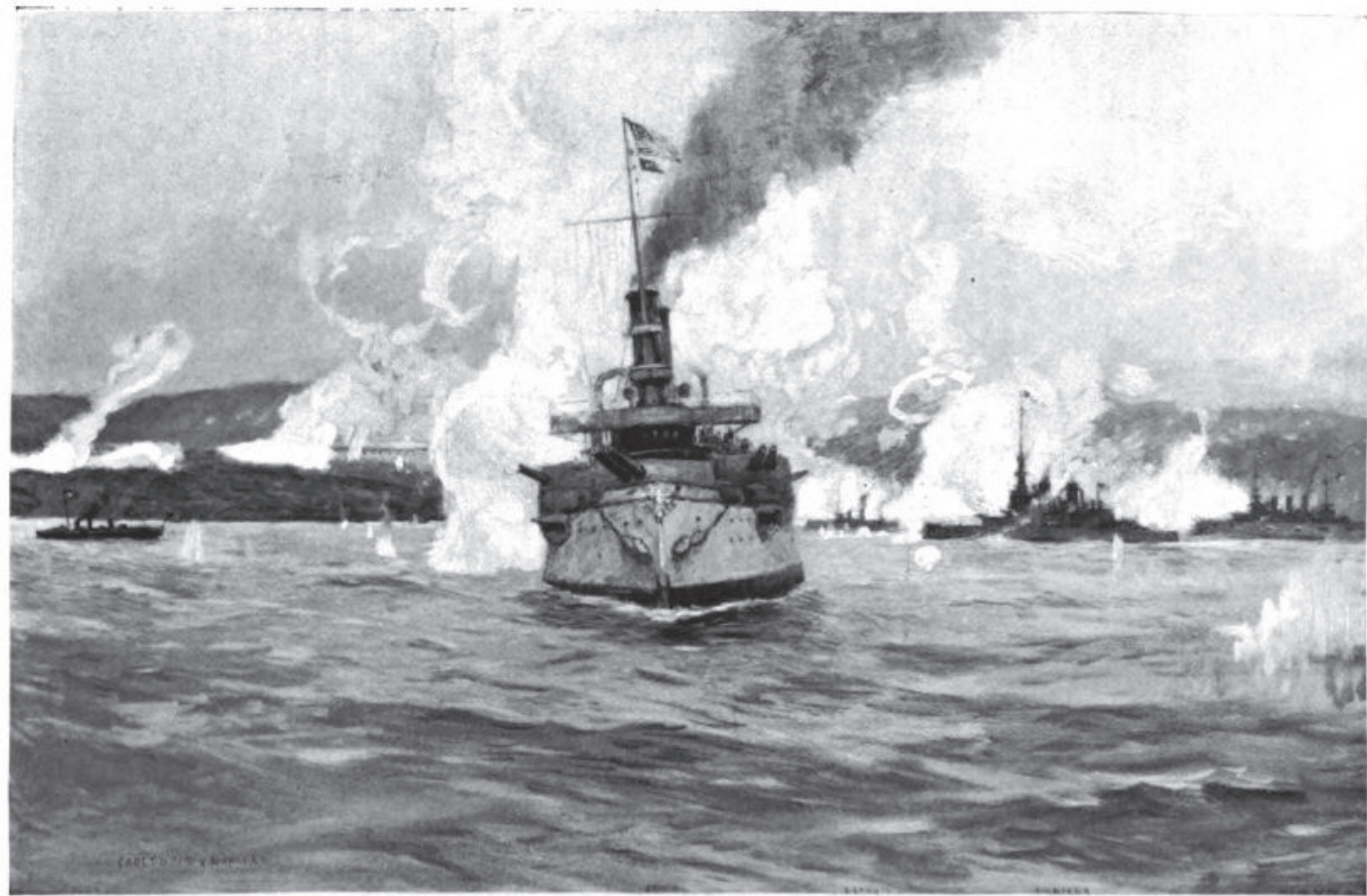
The city of San Juan is situated on an island on the north coast of Puerto Rico—an island which is close to the mainland, projecting slightly, if at all, beyond the general line of the coast, and on its eastern side separated only by a narrow passage of shallow water, which is bridged. The harbor, which has only a small area suitable for deep-draught ships, lies west of the island, and extends behind it on its southern side, and the entrance to the harbor is on its western side between the Morro and Cabras Island. The island is high on its sea face, sloping back towards the harbor, and this sea face is fortified in the old style, with a castle on each flank, and a massive wall connecting them. In addition to the old guns, some of which were still serviceable, the works were defended by several batteries of modern rifles. The town lies back of the wall and castles, on the side sloping towards the harbor, and only the tops of a few houses could be seen from the sea.

Admiral Sampson hoped to find the Spanish squadron coaling in the deepest part of the harbor, about a mile and a half from the entrance, and to close in at once, massing the heavy vessels in front of the entrance, and destroy the Spanish ships by heavy-gun fire. He shifted his flag to the *Iowa* on the evening of May 11. The squadron had steered wide of the land to avoid being seen, and upon reaching a point about north of San Juan it steamed slowly towards the port, regulating speed to arrive at daylight. Some time after midnight the lights of the town became visible, and at the first break of dawn the squadron was close to Cabras Island, ready to open the attack as soon as it should be light enough to see into the harbor. Coral reefs fringe the shore, and the surveys had not been thorough. It was necessary to exercise caution in the approach, and the *Detroit* and *Wompatuck* were put in the lead to take soundings, the latter with instructions to anchor a boat on the ten-fathom line. The *Iowa* led in column, followed by the *Indiana*, *New York*, *Amphitrite*, *Terror*, and *Montgomery*, in the order named.

When the growing light gave a distinct view into the harbor it was clearly seen that Cervera's ships were not there.

The column of vessels stood in as far as the boat anchored by the *Wompatuck*, then turned to the eastward across the mouth of the harbor, and as she brought her starboard guns to bear, the *Iowa* opened upon the batteries of the Morro, the other vessels following as they turned into her wake. The practice was fair. Some of the shells fell short, but the greater number struck the castle or bluff. The roar of the explosions of the heavy twelve and thirteen inch shell and the great craters which they made in the walls of the Morro were object-lessons of the power of modern ordnance. The Spaniards speedily returned our fire, but their marksmanship was poor. The *Iowa* passed the Morro, turned back (followed by the other vessels, retaining their column formation), steamed to the westward, and turning again and passing close to the anchored boat which served as a marking-buoy, again opened fire; and this manœuvre was repeated a second time, when, finding that our bombardment was having no appreciable effect upon the Spanish batteries, the fleet was ordered to withdraw. While the vessels were approaching and firing, the Spanish fire slackened, our shells driving their men away from the guns and under shelter; but as soon as the ships ceased firing and turned, the Spaniards came back to their guns and reopened fire with energy. It was the first illustration, of which there were a number during the war, of the difference between *silencing* a battery and *destroying* it by artillery fire. The first can be readily effected by superior fire; the second is exceedingly difficult of accomplishment by *any* fire, as it requires the actual destruction of guns or their mounts—i. e., they must be actually struck by shell. The Spanish gunnery was incredibly poor. Shots fell in great number about the ships, yet only two were struck, the *Iowa* and the *New York*, with a total loss of one man killed and seven wounded—only two seriously. The Spanish loss was much greater, but was not heavy—probably, from all accounts, something like one hundred killed and wounded; and the injury to the town and its people was slight.

The bombardment of San Juan has been criticised and totally misunderstood. The public did not understand why it was attempted and abandoned; why, if attempted at all, it was not pushed to a



THE BOMBARDMENT OF SAN JUAN.

"The flag ship *Iowa* is turning out after leading the first attack, which began at 5.08 a.m. Huge domes of smoke rose over the ships, hiding the hills. Morro is hidden by the *Iowa*."—C. T. CHAPMAN.

successful issue. With Dewey's achievement fresh in its memory, it looked for similar victories in the Atlantic, and was disappointed at what seemed to be a successful defence against its best fleet, especially as this fleet withdrew uninjured.

The attack on San Juan, after it was ascertained that the Spanish squadron was not there, was simply a "reconnaissance in force." It was desirable to capture the place, to destroy its stores of coal and its defences, and the Spanish coast gunboats likely to be found in its inner harbor, if this could be easily done; but it was not a primary object of the campaign, and in default of army co-operation the place could not have been held after capture. It proved to be better defended than had been anticipated, and after thoroughly testing its strength it became evident that its complete reduction meant certainly a large expenditure of ammunition, and possibly serious injury to some of the ships. Cervera's squadron was at large, and its capture or destruction was of the first importance. Nothing which jeopardized this result could be considered. The Flying Squadron had not yet been sent to Sampson's assistance, and the force in Cuban waters was small. Not a ship nor a gun could be spared if the blockade was to be guarded against Cervera's powerful ships, and so the Admiral reluctantly turned his back on San Juan and stood again to the westward. So well was this move understood that it had not the slightest effect upon the morale of the crews.

The squadron steamed slowly back, the monitors again being taken in tow. On the 14th the hospital-ship *Solace* joined from Key West, bringing the report that the Spanish squadron had returned to Cadiz. The torpedo-boat *Porter* was sent to Puerto Plata, Haiti, to communicate with the department. She returned at half past three on the morning of the 15th, with information that the Spanish fleet was off Curaçoa, and the Flying Squadron was on its way to Key West. She was sent back to Puerto Plata with a bundle of despatches, to proceed thence to Cape Haitien to obtain replies, and to rejoin the flag-ship off that port. The auxiliary cruiser *St. Louis* joined, and, accompanied by the tug *Wompatuck*, was sent to Santiago and Guantanamo to cut cables, thence to Ponce, Puerto Rico, on the same business. The remainder of the

squadron proceeded to the westward, the flag-ship remaining off Cape Haitien to receive despatches. At midnight, May 15, the *Porter* joined from Cape Haitien, with a despatch from the United States consul at Curaçoa stating that the Spanish squadron was to sail from that port at 6 P.M., May 15, for a destination unknown. Instructions were sent to the auxiliary cruisers employed as scouts, and the naval base at Key West was cabled to have coal ready for all the ships, and the flag-ship pushed on after the other vessels.

This was the situation: Admiral Cervera was in the Caribbean with a squadron of four heavily armed and armored cruisers, rated at a trial speed of twenty knots, and presumably capable of making sixteen knots under service conditions. To these cruisers were joined two torpedo-boat-destroyers, new, very fast, the best product of English yards—boats twice as large as our *Dupont* and *Porter*, more sea-worthy, and, for their class, heavily armed. The destination of this squadron was entirely uncertain. It was probably Cienfuegos or Havana, but it might be Santiago de Cuba or San Juan. It was compact and homogeneous—a vast advantage in naval operations, the contrary of which was even then being painfully demonstrated by the presence of the slow-going monitors. Our force was much larger, but it lacked this valuable quality. In fact, we had but two vessels in the navy, the *New York* and *Brooklyn*, which were, ship for ship, fast enough to overtake, and strong enough to fight, the Spanish vessels at their rated speed and strength. Cervera's purpose, if he knew his business, would be to raid the blockade and break it at different points, but especially at Havana; to avoid action with our battleships, to destroy our cruisers and auxiliaries in detail, and perhaps, if able to maintain his coal-supply, to make a dash at points upon the Northern coast. It is difficult to estimate the damage which, with good luck and bold and skilful handling, such a squadron might have done, and this consideration emphasized the necessity of finding it, striking it, destroying it, or shutting it up in a closely blockaded port, and made it the paramount object of the war. The uncertainty and anxiety of those days will never be forgotten by any one who shared them.

On May 17 the flag-ship pushed ahead at full speed for Key West, leaving the remainder of the squadron to follow. At 6 P.M. she met the torpedo-boat *Dupont* with important despatches which confirmed the impression that Cervera would attempt to get into either Cienfuegos or Havana. Arriving at Key West at 4 P.M., May 18, she found Schley's vessels there coaling. The *Iowa* arrived at dark, and the other ships of the San Juan expedition early the next morning. All the vessels coaled as soon as possible. The light vessels on the blockade had been warned against surprise, and the *Cincinnati* and *Vesuvius* were scouting in the Yucatan Channel.

Plans were at once made for new dispositions. Commodore Schley, with the *Brooklyn*, *Massachusetts*, *Texas*, and *Scorpion*, sailed on the morning of May 19 for Cienfuegos, by way of Cape San Antonio, the western end of Cuba. The next day the *Iowa*, *Castine*, collier *Merrimac*, and the *Dupont* were despatched to Cienfuegos to join him, and on the 21st the *Marblehead*, *Eagle*, and *Vixen* were sent on the same business, thus placing a force on the southern side of Cuba strong enough to destroy Cervera or blockade him in Cienfuegos. It should be remembered that he left Curaçoa on the 15th, and that if his destination were either Santiago or Cienfuegos he had already arrived. He had in fact entered Santiago at about the hour of Schley's sailing from Key West.

Reports of this arrival began to reach the department and the commander-in-chief. At first they were looked upon with suspicion, but they were repeatedly confirmed, and were finally believed. All this information was sent by fast despatch-boats to Schley as soon as received, and on May 24, having ascertained that the Spanish squadron was not in Cienfuegos, he sailed east, arrived in the vicinity of Santiago on May 26, and established a blockade of that port on May 28. The next day the *Cristóbal Colon* and *Almirante Oquendo* were seen moored in the

lower anchorage, between Cay Smith and Punta Gorda.

After the departure of Schley from Key West, the remaining vessels, including such of the monitors as were in condition for service, went as fast as they were coaled to the Havana blockade, the *New York* joining the force there at noon on May 21. Commodore Watson had come from the North while the San Juan expedition was away, and had hoisted his broad pennant in the *Dolphin* as a divi-



THE FLAG-SHIP "NEW YORK."

sion commander. Commodore Schley was placed under Admiral Sampson's orders, and later the Flying Squadron was broken up by the Navy Department as a separate command, and Schley was assigned to duty as a division commander. Commodore Remey was ordered to command the naval base at Key West. The cruiser *New Orleans* joined the fleet. She was the *Amazonas* purchased from Brazil, was built by the Armstrongs, and was new, fast, and powerful.

The western approaches to Havana were fairly covered by Schley's squadron. To protect the blockade of that important port from an attack from the eastward a force could do the most effective service if placed in the narrow waters between the island of Cuba and the Bahama Banks—that is, in or near the Old Bahama Channel. The *New York*, with the *Indi-*

ana, two monitors, seven light cruisers, two auxiliaries, and two torpedo-boats, proceeded to a point about two hundred miles east of Havana, between the Nicolas and the Old Bahama channels, and occupied those waters in battle formation, keeping scouts well in advance, and maintaining daily communication with Key West. The *Cincinnati* and *Vesuvius* joined on the 25th, and later the monitor *Amphitrite*, disabled, and towed by the *Panther*—an unarmed transport. The force was large enough, but was heterogeneous and unwieldy. On the night of the 25th it moved westward towards Havana, and on the morning of May 27 the flag-ship proceeded alone to Key West, to be in direct communication with the Navy Department and with Mole St. Nicholas—the point of communication with scouts. The *New Orleans* and the collier *Sterling* were sent to join Schley on the same date. The *New York* reached Key West at 2 A.M., May 28, and found the *Oregon* there coaling, she having just arrived, after her magnificent run of 14,000 miles, from the Pacific coast.

The situation at Santiago was critical. Cervera had been there nine days, and the port was still open. He had had plenty of time to coal his vessels and get away. Admiral Sampson consulted with the department, and at 11 P.M. on May 29 sailed in the *New York* from Key West, arrived off Havana the next morning, signalled the *Oregon*, *Mayflower*, and *Porter* to join him, and proceeded to Santiago at a speed of thirteen knots, leaving Commodore Watson in command of everything afloat on the north coast. Just before leaving Key West he heard from Schley that a blockade of Santiago had been established.

The commander-in-chief arrived off Santiago at 6 A.M., June 1, and found Commodore Schley, with the *Brooklyn*, *Massachusetts*, *Iowa*, *Texas*, *Marblehead*, *New Orleans*, *Harvard*, *Vixen*, and the colliers *Merrimac* and *Sterling*, cruising off the port. The weather was fine, the sea smooth, and during several days coal could be taken from colliers almost as readily as if the fleet were in port. On the day before, May 31, Commodore Schley, with the *Massachusetts*, *Iowa*, and *New Orleans*, and flying his flag in the *Massachusetts*, passed in front of the port and bombarded the forts and the *Colon* and *Oquendo*, still lying in sight at the lower

anchorage. Both ships and forts returned the fire, but the distance was so great—from seventy-five hundred to ten thousand yards—that no effect was produced upon either side. On the morning of June 1, after Admiral Sampson's arrival, the *Colon* and *Oquendo* went up the harbor, and none of the Spanish armored cruisers were again seen from the sea until the 3d of July, when they left the port.

The next act in the drama of war is one with which the world is familiar, the news of which, flashed to all quarters of the globe, aroused that irrepressible thrill of pride and sympathy which greets a deed of heroic gallantry.

As soon as Cervera had sought and found the shelter of Santiago, the question of obstructing the port, and thus preventing his egress, had been taken into consideration, and it was decided to employ the collier *Merrimac* for this purpose. A long narrow entrance is characteristic of Cuban harbors, and this peculiarity is emphasized at Santiago. The opening in the bluff which leads to the bay inside is a mere gorge, and the deep-water channel at a point just inside of the Morro—the castle at the entrance—is not more than a hundred yards wide. Also, at this narrow point there is a turn which adds to the difficulty of navigation. Above this turn the channel gradually increases in width. About twelve hundred yards inside the Morro the Punta Gorda, a high promontory, juts out to the westward, shutting off all further view. Guns were mounted both on the east and west sides of the entrance and on Punta Gorda, and the channel was mined. A short distance inside of the entrance, to the left, lay Cay Smith, a small island, separated from the mainland by a narrow channel, in which was moored the *Reina Mercedes* as a stationary torpedo-ship, her tubes commanding the main channel.

A long heavy steamer sunk across the channel in its narrowest part, at the turn, would completely block it against the passage of large vessels. The *Merrimac* was about four hundred feet long, heavily built, and still contained of her cargo of coal more than two thousand tons. Work was immediately begun to prepare her for destruction, stripping her of articles of value, arranging anchors and chains for instant use, and placing electric torpedoes to blow in her sides below the water-line.

Hobson was graduated from the Naval Academy in 1889, at the head of his class, receiving the usual education and training of a naval officer, and after his graduation served for several months on the cruiser *Chicago* as a midshipman. He was then sent abroad as a student of naval architecture, and later was commissioned assistant naval constructor, which rank he held at the time of his exploit. He had been placed in charge of the recently established postgraduate course in naval construction at the Naval Academy, and, when war broke out, came to the flag-ship with the three cadets who formed his class. One of these cadets, Powell, accompanied the *Merrimac* in a steam-launch until close in to the harbor, when he took off the pilot and the additional men. Admiral Sampson had called Hobson in to advise respecting the best method of sinking the *Merrimac* almost instantly when she should reach the desired position, as quick work in a tideway was essential to success. Hobson took the matter up with eagerness and energy, made valuable suggestions, and begged that he might be allowed to conduct the enterprise. The officer in command of the *Merrimac* insisted upon his right to command the vessel upon any service for which she might be selected. And there were a number of volunteers. But the Admiral decided in favor of Hobson because of his familiarity with the many details of her preparation for this especial service.

Volunteers came forward in crowds. A hundred *Merrimacs* might have been manned. Only seven men were detailed. The simplicity and sincerity of these men, and the modest estimate which they placed upon their hazardous service, were well illustrated by a remark made after their exchange. Two of them had been made warrant-officers by the Navy Department—one an acting boatswain, and the other an acting gunner. They were called into the cabin to subscribe to the oaths which were to accompany their acceptances, and Captain Chadwick made some appropriate remarks. One of them replied: "And we want to thank you, sir, for *allowing* us to go. We considered it a great privilege, sir, to be allowed to go, when so many good men wanted to go." Nothing is impossible to a service whose men are animated by such a spirit.

On the morning of June 3, at four

o'clock, the *Merrimac* went in. The story has been often told. It seems marvellous that any escaped alive from that gorge of fire and flame. The enterprise failed of its object—fortunately, as events afterward fell out. Her steering-gear was shot away, and the ship drifted up with the tide, before she was sunk, to a point where she wholly failed to obstruct the channel; but the example and influence of such acts of courage and devotion are powerful and far-reaching. As Powell's steam-launch came back, the Admiral and half a dozen officers on the bridge examined her carefully through their glasses, and the men crowded to the side. Neither Hobson nor any of his crew were in sight. In a dead silence Powell came up the side, came forward, mounted the bridge ladder, and with the hushed, even voice of one who has seen death near at hand, made his report to the Admiral, closing it with the words, "And no one came back, sir." He had waited until daylight to pick up a chance swimmer, and had come out under the fire of the Socapa battery.

As soon as he reached Santiago, Admiral Sampson instituted a close blockade of the port. Each ship had its station indicated by bearing and distance from the Morro, and was directed to maintain it. The vessels, as distributed, formed a semicircle about the mouth of the harbor, the battle-ships in front, the cruisers on their flanks, the auxiliaries nearer the land. The *New York* was east of the battle-ships, the *Brooklyn* west of them. The distance of the ships from the harbor's mouth was first placed at six miles during the day, closing in to four at night. Later the distance was diminished; and finally, towards the end of the blockade, it was from three to four miles in the daytime and two at night. The ships were constantly under way: it was impossible to anchor because of the depth of water, even had it been desirable to do so. Steam was ready, and they were always cleared for action. Orders were given to close in at once and engage should the enemy attempt to escape—to sink his vessels or force them to run ashore. The instructions to each Captain on June 2 fitted exactly the conditions on July 3, when Cervera came out.

The batteries defending the entrance to the harbor were bombarded on June 6 and 16. The vessels closed in from their sta-

tions to ranges of from two thousand to twenty-five hundred yards, closed up on the flank vessels in order to enfilade the batteries as much as possible, and thus

The moon was full in the early days of the operations before Santiago, and movements of vessels could readily be seen; but when the dark nights began, the efficiency of the blockade demanded additional measures. A patrol of armed launches was kept close up to the harbor's mouth, and outside of these launches a picket-line of auxiliaries, the *Gloucester*, *Vixen*, and *Suwanee* doing a large part of this duty. Torpedo-boats were employed as additional pickets when available. The harbor entrance was also illuminated by search-lights, the following method, after various trials, having been found satisfactory. The duty was assigned to the battle-ships, and only one at a time employed her light. Taking turns of two hours each, they moved in towards the entrance, and placing themselves in the prolongation of its axis,



MORRO CASTLE, SANTIAGO.

divided into two squadrons, fired deliberately until directed to withdraw. The batteries were not strong, and on both days were speedily silenced. A few guns were struck and destroyed, but the greater number remained intact.

Injuries to the works were quickly repaired. A twelve-inch shell from the *Texas* exploded under a six-inch gun in the Socapa battery, blew it into the air and capsized it, and, it was said, killed all its crew. Two days afterwards that gun was remounted and ready again for service.

The principal advantage of these bombardments to the American fleet was the "fire discipline" which they gave the men—the habit of aiming and firing their guns while themselves under fire. They learned not to fire until they could see their mark, and were made to realize that a careless shot is thrown away. These are very simple propositions, but men have made a long step in military training when they can remember them and act upon them in the heat and excitement of battle.

threw the beam of a light directly up the channel, bringing into plain view every object as far up as Punta Gorda. It was necessary to handle the lights with great care to avoid disclosing the launches and picket vessels, but the requisite skill was soon attained.

It never ceased to be a matter of surprise that the Spaniards allowed this to go on without interference or annoyance. To say nothing of the batteries, the ships were often within easy rifle range—less than two thousand yards. A battalion of riflemen, or, better still, a score of sharpshooters, would have made the position very uncomfortable, if not impossible. Search-lights are worked from bridges or military tops, and are not protected. But the enemy pursued his traditional policy of never attacking, and we ran in under his batteries and did as we liked. It is a lesson of the war, however, that should be taken with many reserves. Later in the month, after the army had arrived, and it was felt that the coils tightening around Cervera might

stimulate him into trying a dash for liberty, a second battle-ship was kept alongside the search-light ship, her broadside bearing on the port, and her guns ready.

Guantanamo, thirty-eight miles east of Santiago, was occupied as a base and coaling-station, and proved to be of the greatest value. The detachment of marines which had been a month or more at Key West in a transport landed and encamped at Playa del Este on the bay. The *Marblehead* was stationed there, and Commander McCulla was placed in charge.

The *Vesuvius* joined the fleet and began the occasional night firing of guncotton projectiles from her pneumatic guns. The fuses worked admirably, and the explosion of the shells was terrific. When they fell and burst in the water, the shock was felt through the hulls of ships several miles away. The firing was necessarily almost at random, and it is doubtful if it did actual harm; but the moral effect must have been great.

On June 20 the army expedition arrived, in about thirty transports—the Fifth Corps, commanded by Major-General Shafter, and composed chiefly of regular troops. These troops were convoyed by the battle-ship *Indiana*, five cruisers, six small auxiliaries, and three torpedo-boats, the whole under Captain Taylor.

General Shafter's headquarters were in the *Segurança*. The chief of staff went out in a cruiser to call upon him, and the *Segurança* came in to the blockading line. Then Admiral Sampson went on board, the transport proceeded to Aserraderos, and the Admiral and General went on shore, and had an interview with the Cuban generals Garcia, Rabi, and Castillo.

The landing of the army was begun on June 22, at Daiquiri, thirteen miles east of Santiago, and was continued on the four succeeding days at Siboney, eight miles from Santiago. No opposition was encountered at either point. In addition to handling General Shafter's corps, General Garcia and three thousand Cubans were transported from Aserraderos to Siboney. Captain Goodrich had charge of the landing, and all the boats of the fleet were sent to assist him. It was very successfully carried out, in the face of many difficulties. When the disembarkation began at Daiquiri, feints were made at Siboney and at Aguadores, and at Cabañas, west of Santiago. Vessels were assigned by the Admiral to shell the beach

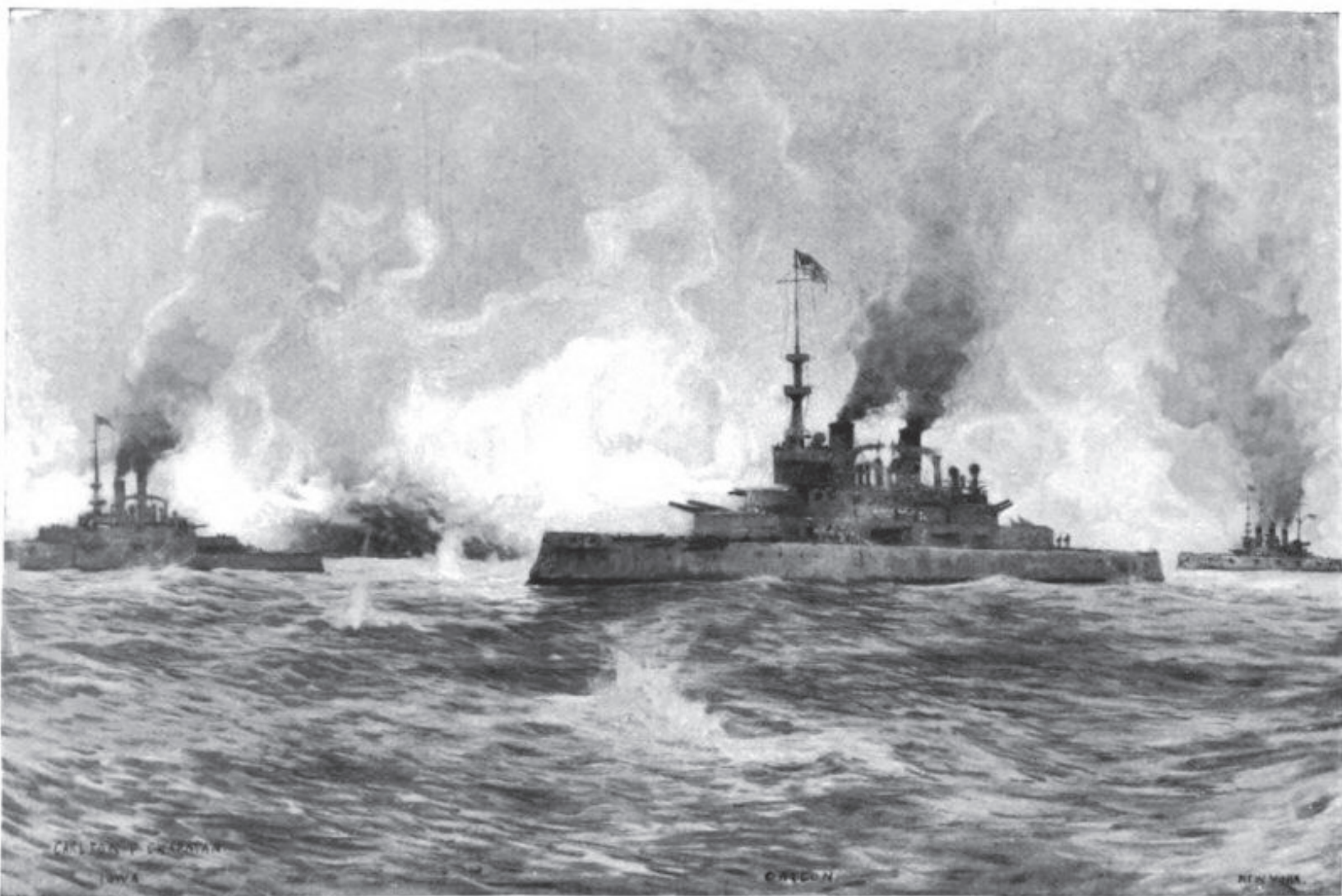
at each of these points; and some of the waiting transports were sent west of Santiago, to convey the impression that a landing was to be attempted at Cabañas. During this bombardment the *Texas* was struck by a shell from the Socapa battery, killing one man and wounding eight. It was the first hit the Santiago batteries scored. They made but one more—the mortar shell that struck the *Indiana*.

General Shafter advanced upon Santiago. On July 2, as a diversion, and at his request, the fleet heavily bombarded the batteries defending the harbor entrance, and, as usual, suffered no damage.

The 3d of July, 1898, will be noted for the most complete destruction of an organized and powerful naval force recorded in history. Not only were all the vessels sunk, or stranded and burned, but the Spanish Admiral and his surviving captains, officers, and men were taken prisoners. Only a few—possibly a score—swam from the torpedo-boats to territory held by the Spanish forces, and were able to reach Santiago with the news of their defeat. The ships were stranded in territory held by the Cuban insurgents, and no line of retreat was open.

Cervera was ordered to attempt to escape, and after consultation with his captains, decided that the chances of surprise would be greatest on Sunday morning, which, in all navies, is given to a formal weekly inspection and to church services. In one respect he was right. It was a surprise. There was no expectation in the squadron that the Spaniards would ever attempt to escape in the daytime; but as the ships were under way, always cleared for action, and ready to open fire as soon as the men could get to the guns, the surprise made little difference—not more than two or three minutes in the time of beginning the fight.

The morning was clear and pleasant, the sea smooth, the trade-wind light. The flag-ship *New York* had left her blockading station, and was on her way to Siboney. It had become necessary for Admiral Sampson to see and consult with General Shafter respecting future operations; and as the great size and weight of the general made it difficult for him to come to Siboney, the Admiral consented to go to the front to his headquarters. The cavalry escort was ready, and the Admiral and staff were on the quarter-deck prepared to go on shore.

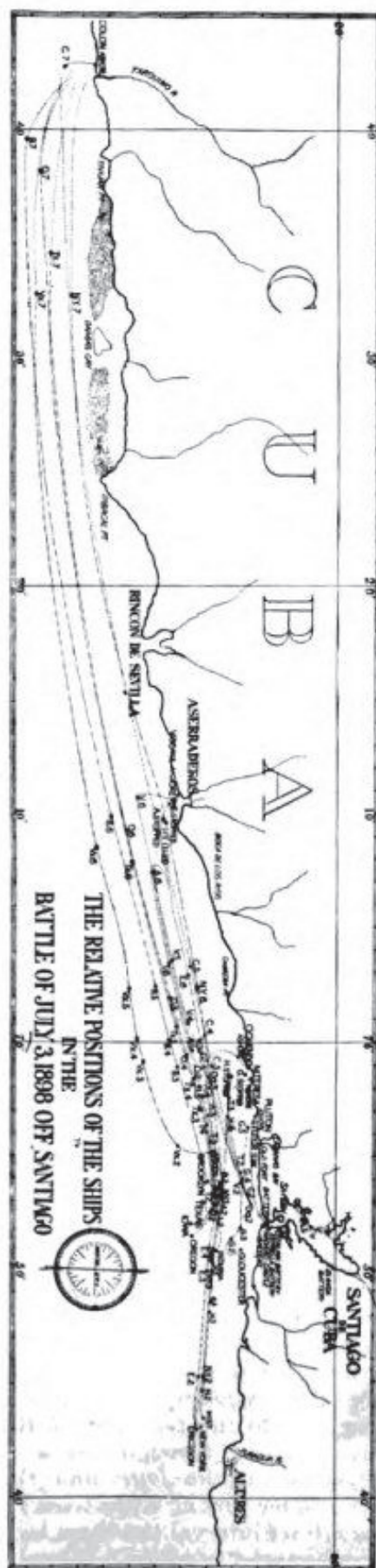


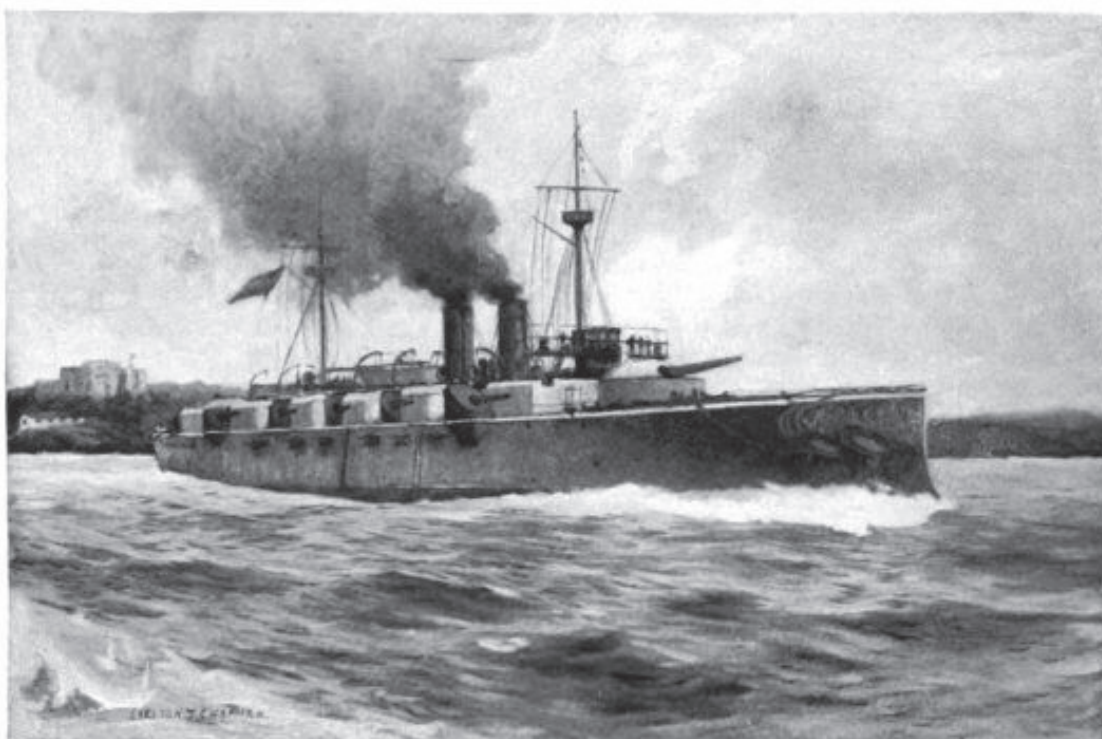
THE EASTERN SQUADRON BOMBARDING THE BATTERIES AT SANTIAGO ON JUNE 6

The flag-ship was about seven miles east of the Morro, and a mile from the land, when the smoke in the channel and the beginning of sharp firing indicated that the enemy was coming out. Instantly the ship was turned about and steamed back to the westward at her best speed. The distribution of the squadron at that instant was as follows: The *New York* was four miles to the eastward of her usual blockading station. The remaining heavy ships were arranged in an irregular arc of a circle in front of the port, their distances from its entrance varying probably from two and a half to four miles. The *Iowa* lay south of the entrance, looking directly up the channel. East of her were the *Oregon* and *Indiana*, the latter about southeast of the entrance. West of the *Iowa* were the *Texas* and *Brooklyn*. Between the *Iowa* and *Texas* was the vacant post of the *Massachusetts*, which had gone at four o'clock that morning to Guantanamo to coal. The auxiliaries *Gloucester* and *Vixen* lay closer inshore, near the flanks of the line—the *Gloucester* on the east side, two miles from the entrance, and the *Vixen* on the west side, four miles from the entrance, and a mile from shore. The *Suranee* and *Vesuvius*, which had done arduous work during the blockade, had also the hard luck of being absent on that day, having gone to Guantanamo for coal. The torpedo-boat *Ericsson* was in company with the *New York*.

Quarters for inspection had sounded, and the men were going to their divisions, when sharp eyes on the bridge of the *Iowa* saw the bows of a cruiser coming around Cay Smith. Instantly the signal "Enemy escaping" was hoisted, a gun was fired to call attention to it, and the call to stations for battle was sounded. Within two minutes every officer and man in the fleet knew that the Spanish vessels were coming out.

Cervera's flag-ship, the *Infanta Maria Teresa* (T. on map), led the Spanish column, and following her came the *Vizcaya* (V.), the *Cristóbal Colon* (C.), and the *Almirante Oquendo* (Oq.), in that order. These vessels were six or eight hundred yards apart. Then, with an interval of about twelve hundred yards between them and the cruisers, came the torpedo boats *Furor* and *Pluton*. Their speed in the channel was probably ten knots, which each ship increased to the highest point as soon as the open sea was reached. Upon passing the Morro each vessel opened fire with her port battery as she turned to the westward, and the Socapa battery assisted them with a vigorous cannonade. In less than fifteen minutes from the first alarm the entire Spanish squadron was outside, and all the blockading vessels had opened upon it a sustained and accurate fire. The map shows the positions of the ships at seven stages in the progress of the battle.

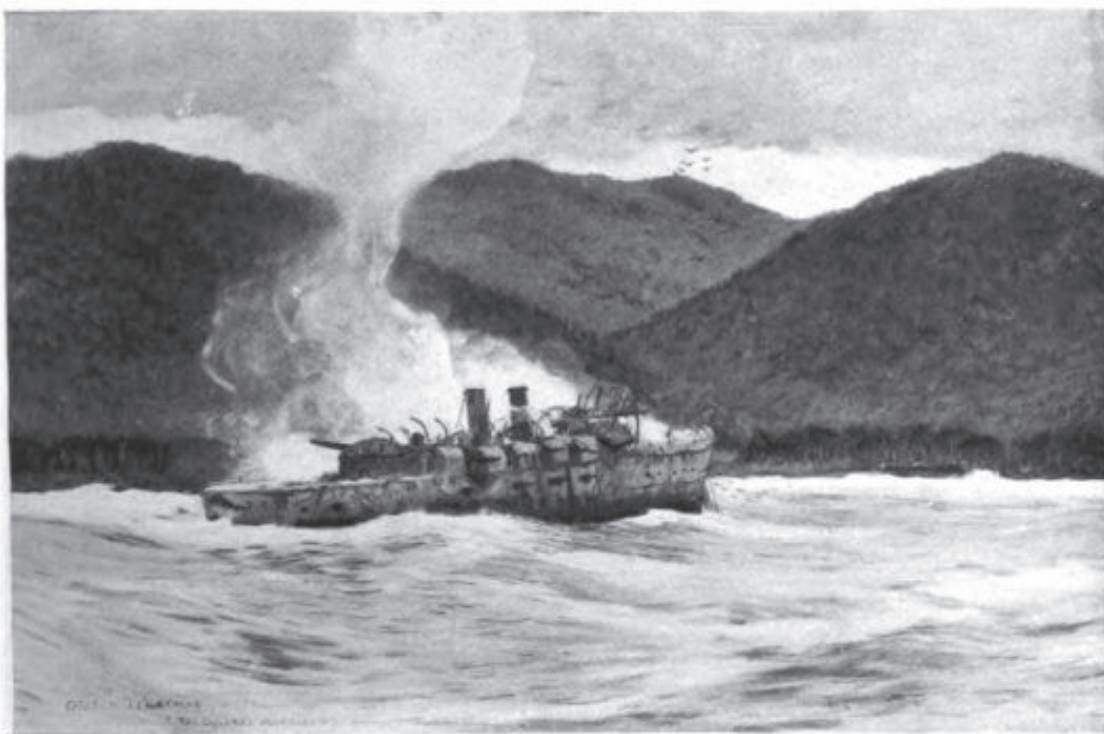




THE "ALMIRANTE OQUENDO."
The Type of the *Viscaya* and the *Maria Teresa*.

Our ships were all heading inshore, as usual, in obedience to the Admiral's instructions, which had been given to avoid loss of time in turning, having in view precisely this situation. They all steamed at once towards the mouth of the harbor, forcing fires and rapidly increasing speed, and opened fire. This manœuvre—a number of vessels moving from different directions towards the same point—naturally brought them closer to each other; but as the Spanish vessels turned to the westward, they also turned to the westward towards them, and soon came into parallel courses in chase. The *Texas*, whose blockading station was some distance to the westward of the *Iowa*'s, stood so far to the eastward towards the harbor mouth that she came into close quarters with the latter ship before she put her helm astarboard and swung around towards the Spaniards, and to the westward with them. At the same moment the *Oregon*, which lay at the beginning just to the eastward of the *Iowa*, came rushing through like a thunderbolt between the *Iowa* and *Texas*, the white water curling away from her bows. For a brief interval the three battle-ships were bunched together. It was not good

gunnery alone that was shown on that day; there was also admirable seamanship in the handling of those immense vessels at full speed and in close quarters. Not one of those clear-eyed captains lost sight for an instant of any responsibility which devolved upon him. No injury was done by careless or hasty firing. Although the *Iowa* and *Texas* were shrouded in the smoke of their guns—although the men in the turrets, seeing imperfectly, might well mistake a friend for an enemy—the *Oregon*'s fire, as she passed the *Iowa*, was held absolutely in check, and as she drew ahead her starboard broadside flashed into flame, some of the guns being actually fired over the *Iowa*'s forecastle deck. The *Brooklyn*, occupying the westernmost position in the blockading line, stood at full speed towards the Morro; and as she drew near the Spanish vessels, and perceived their formation and direction, put her helm aport and turned away from the land to the eastward and southward, to come to a westerly course, employing her batteries as they bore. This manœuvre carried her farther away from the Spanish column and cost her some loss of time; but she was still left the leading



THE "ALMIRANTE OQUENDO" AFTER THE BATTLE.

vessel in the chase, although more to the southward than the others.

While the battle was beginning and taking shape, the *New York* was coming up from the eastward at her best speed, which was constantly increasing, but which seemed very slow to her impatient people. Ahead of them was a brilliant spectacle, in which they had always expected to take a leading part. But it was seen that there would be a chase, and it was known what the vessel could do when she got her maximum speed. Passing the harbor entrance, she received the undivided attention of the batteries. The Admiral would not permit any shell to be wasted upon them, and so they fired at her deliberately and without reply—and without result. A few miles beyond she passed the *Furor* and the *Pluton* and the *Gloucester*, which was completing their destruction. She fired a few shells at the *Pluton*, which appeared to be attempting to escape back into port, and then received a signal from the *Gloucester* that the destroyers had surrendered. Sweeping past the stranded ships, and increasing her speed to seventeen knots, she gained rapidly on the chase, and was only seven or eight miles astern of the *Colon* when she

surrendered, or about the same distance that she was from the Morro when the Spanish squadron came out, having gained in the last part of the chase what she lost in the first.

The *Gloucester's* cool and gallant fighting has won deserved recognition. She is an entirely unprotected yacht—formerly Mr. Pierpont Morgan's *Corsair*, in which slight alterations only were made, and which was well armed with a battery of six-pounder and three-pounder guns. At the outset she began firing at the armored cruisers; but not perceiving the destroyers, and believing that they would follow the cruisers, Wainwright slowed down, his steam meanwhile rising rapidly with forced draught, and waited for these small craft, which he justly regarded as his proper antagonists. When they appeared he steamed for them at seventeen knots, and opened a rapid and accurate fire, which he continued at close range, and until they yielded in a sinking condition. The battle-ships also gave them a portion of their fire, but at considerably greater ranges. It is impossible to apportion exactly the credit for their destruction, but it is certain that a large part of it belongs to the *Gloucester*.

The rest of the story is soon told. The first rush of the enemy's ships carried them past our squadron, but during this passage they suffered terribly from the withering fire of the battle-ships. They emerged from the harbor firing rapidly, and shrouded in their own smoke; but speedily this smoke diminished, and finally ceased, as their fire was silenced, their men being driven from the guns by our destructive shells. The *Maria Teresa* and *Oquendo* were soon on fire aft, and were run ashore close together at Nima Nima and at Juan Gonzales, seven and a half and eight miles from the Morro. The *Vizcaya* hung on half an hour longer, and then, burning like the others, was beached at Aserraderos, fifteen miles from Santiago. This left only the *Cristóbal*

though running for her life, she made, between the harbor entrance and Rio Tarquino, an average speed of only 13.7 knots.

Soon after the *Oquendo* was stranded the Admiral directed the *Indiana* to return and resume the blockade of the port, and at Aserraderos the *Iowa* and *Ericsson* were ordered to discontinue the chase. The *Iowa*, *Ericsson*, and *Gloucester*, and the *Harvard* and *Hist*, which arrived at that time upon the scene, rescued the Spanish prisoners, a work of considerable difficulty and danger, as the vessels were burning fiercely, their loaded guns and reserves of ammunition on deck were exploding with the heat, and the fire might at any moment reach their main magazines. There was also considerable sea, and the

surf was breaking just inside of them. But all risks were taken as cheerfully to save life as, a few minutes earlier, to destroy it, and every kindness and attention was lavished upon the wounded and destitute Spaniards. Including the *Colon's* people, seventeen hundred and fifty prisoners were taken, many of them severely wounded. The Spanish killed and drowned numbered about four hundred. Our own ships enjoyed the most extraordinary immunity from injury. The *Brooklyn* was struck about twenty times, the greater number of hits being by small projectiles on her armor or through her smokestacks and ventilators, and doing no harm. She lost

one man killed and one wounded. It was stated that the Spaniards, regarding the *Brooklyn* as our fastest ship, and hoping to disable or destroy her, gave her a large portion of their fire, and this may have been true. But it was also stated that they intended to concentrate upon the *Iowa*. There is always much uncertainty in the reports and speculations which follow a great event, in the plans and intentions which look backward. The *Iowa* was struck twice, but no one was hurt. None of the other vessels was touched, not even the *Gloucester*, fighting at close quarters, and exposed to the fire of the



THE "MARIA TERESA" ON THE BEACH.

Colon, which had then gained a lead of about six miles; but she could not maintain her speed, and the *Brooklyn*, *Oregon*, *Texas*, *Vixen*, and *New York* were all in chase and all gaining. At 12.50 the *Oregon* and *Brooklyn* opened fire, and the *Oregon*, at a range of 9500 yards, sent a thirteen-inch shell over the *Colon*. She made no further attempt at resistance, but at 1.20 hauled down her flag, and ran ashore at Rio Tarquino, forty-eight miles from Santiago. When she surrendered she was four and one-half miles from the *Oregon*, and about the same distance from the *Brooklyn*. Al-

Socapa battery as well as to that of the destroyers. An examination of the Spanish vessels showed that many of the gun sights were still set at high elevations—for distances of four thousand yards or more. Evidently, through lack of training or through demoralization caused by our fire, they had not been readjusted during the battle. This may account for the extraordinary immunity of the battle-ships, which closed in at once: the enemy's shell passed over them instead of striking them. There seems to be no other way of explaining it, as accuracy of fire is mainly a question of range; and it illustrates again the paramount importance of thorough-going gunnery training.

At midnight on July 4 the Spaniards brought the *Reina Mercedes* to the mouth of the harbor for the purpose of sinking her and obstructing the channel. In sinking her they were aided by the guns of the *Massachusetts* and *Texas*, and the task was speedily accomplished; but the obstruction of the channel was not complete, and vessels could still pass. This attempt was assisted by the shore batteries, and the *Indiana* was struck by an eight-inch-mortar shell, which exploded in the officers' quarters—fortunately at that moment vacant.

Every one felt that the destruction of Cervera's squadron meant the end of the war. The failure to mobilize an efficient squadron under Admiral Camara proved that its place could not be filled, and that the sea power of Spain was broken. General Shafter entered into an armistice with the Spanish commander, which continued, with a brief interruption, until July 17, when the city surrendered. During this interruption, on the 10th and 11th, ships detailed for this purpose bombarded Santiago from Aguadores, eighty-five hundred yards distant, firing by compass ranges, and employing only eight-inch guns. The fall of the shot was checked by reports from the front, transmitted through a field-telegraph line and a signal station on shore. The practice was very accurate, and, as



THE WRECK OF THE "REINA MERCEDES."

found by subsequent examination, very destructive. On the 13th two battle-ships were ordered from Guantanamo to continue this bombardment with thirteen-inch guns, but a renewal of the armistice made this unnecessary.

July saw considerable naval activity at other points on the Cuban coast. Three attacks were made on Manzanillo, the last on the 18th, by seven small vessels. They entered the harbor and bombarded the water-front, destroying three transports, a guard-ship, and four gunboats, but purposely doing as little damage as possible to the town. A fourth attack was made upon this place on August 12 to compel its surrender, but was interrupted by a Spanish flag of truce, which brought a telegram announcing the signing of the peace protocol. The bay of Nipe, on the northeast coast, was occupied on July 21 by an expedition of four small vessels, and the Spanish cruiser *Jorge Juan* was sunk at her anchors.

After the surrender of Santiago the heavy ships assembled at Guantanamo for overhauling and repairs preparatory to crossing the Atlantic. Commodore Watson, flying his broad pennant on the *Newark*, had come to the south side of Cuba about July 1, and later shifted his pennant to the *Oregon*, taking command of the "Eastern Squadron." The remaining heavy ships were to form a "Covering Squadron" to see the Eastern Squadron through the Mediterranean.

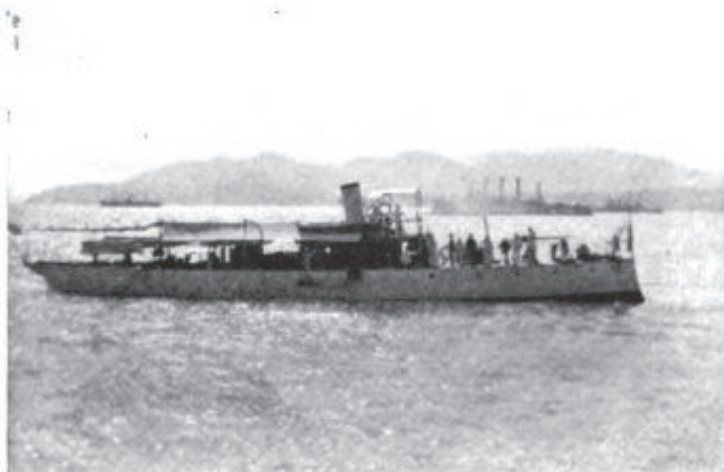
General Miles had come to Santiago in the *Yale* on July 11; remained there and at Guantanamo until July 21, when he sailed for Puerto Rico with a powerful convoy. The battle-ship *Massachusetts*, three monitors, five cruisers, and five armed auxiliaries were sent to support the Puerto-Rican expedition.

A sketch of the naval operations of this war is not complete without a word respecting the admirable systems of administration and supply. Although the enlisted force was more than doubled, and the number of vessels in commission quite trebled, everything went on smoothly and efficiently. Coal was abundantly furnished, and was never lacking in ample quantities, either at Key West or at Guantanamo. Steam-colliers were purchased and placed under naval command, and these were supplemented by chartered schooners. Three supply vessels were obtained and fitted with refrigerating plants. Two of these were employed to distribute fresh meat, ice, and vegetables

them was placed upon individuals, and these individuals were given commensurate authority and discretion. In a word, it was straight unfettered *business* conducted by competent men. The resources of the Bureau of Ordnance seemed limitless. It found guns for the auxiliaries, and repeated supplies of ammunition for everybody. During the creation of our modern fleet picked men of the navy had been at its head and in its several departments. Sicard, Folger, and Sampson had preceded O'Neil, the present chief. The bureau was organized for work and for expansion. It knew what its resources were, and, better still, it knew what it lacked, and how to arrange to make the deficiencies good.

The care of the men's health was most gratifying in its results. They had been on board ship several months without liberty or relaxation—some of them seven or eight months—in a tropical climate, and practically at sea all of the time. The ships were heated above the normal

temperature by their own fires, and the ventilation was impaired by the war necessity of keeping certain ports and hatches closed to avoid showing any lights. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, with good food, good water, and careful supervision, the crews were in August, when hostilities were suspended, in excellent condition, and ready for indefinite further service in Cuba or elsewhere. One day's sick report is an illustration. On August 5 there were seventeen ships at Guantanamo,



THE "ALVARADO."

Type of the Spanish gunboats surrendered to the American fleet.

to the vessels on the Cuban blockade, and the third was held in readiness to accompany the Eastern Squadron. The men had more fresh beef than they wanted. The *Solace*, a hospital-ship, was fitted out, and the *Vulcan*, a floating workshop. Red tape was never allowed to interfere with efficiency in the department, at the navy-yards, or in the fleet. When it obstructed, it was cut. Results were demanded; the responsibility of obtaining

with a total personnel of 5369. The sick numbered 159—three per cent.—nearly all light cases of malaria. The marine battalion on shore, numbering 496, had only 12 sick—less than two and one-half per cent.—with an average duration of treatment of three days. This battalion had come to Key West early in May, had spent a month on board a transport, and had been fifty-six days on shore. It had seen fighting, had spent nights in the

trenches, and had done constant outpost and picket duty in the woods; but sanitary regulations had been strictly enforced.

As a result of these favorable conditions there was marked contentment and confidence among the men. One of the pleasantest features of the war was the attitude of the enlisted force. In the close quarters of a ship much of their conversation among themselves is unavoidably overheard, and their sentiments cannot fail to become known. During the whole war there was no grumbling—no complaint of deprivation of liberty, of food, of discipline, or of work; and the last was often severe, as the ships were frequently coaled. On the contrary, they continually talked of the war and of fighting; of what had been done and of what remained to be done; and their conduct had never been so good. They were too busy and too interested to get into mischief.

A feature of the war was the *Squadron Bulletin*—a daily paper printed on a hand-press in the *New York* for squadron distribution. As all despatches and reports came to the Admiral, the flag-ship became the sole repository of information; and other ships, although in company and not a mile away, might be quite ignorant of most interesting events. The demand for news was natural and proper, and a daily paper was the easiest method of satisfying it. Each evening the chief of staff dictated to a stenographer the facts relating to naval and military movements which had taken place or which had been reported during the day. This went at once to press, and was sent out the next morning. It was much appreciated by the men and officers of the fleet, attracted no little attention outside, and has been commented upon by an English service paper as worthy of imitation.